



G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero, Volume 1

Larry Hama

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Jesse says

Not nearly as crappy as one would think it would be. I wanted to read it, just to see if a comic book that was essentially a toy commercial would even be readable, and the answer is yeah, sort of. There were some genuinely clever moments, as well as some characters that didn't make it into the cartoon or toyline that would have been a lot of fun (like the October Guard, the USSR's answer to the Joes). The best moment was when a couple of Joes were mopping up after liberating a Cobra stronghold. One asks "Any wounded?" The other replies "Yeah, a couple Cobra troopers though they had old Snake Eyes disarmed. Hawk should talk to him about not keeping that in his boot. That's gotta be against the Geneva Convention." They never explained what they were talking about, just leaving it to the imagination.

Aymee says

Not really what I was expecting. But then, I wasn't allowed to read comics as a kid (they were for 'boys' according to my mother) so I don't have a lot to base my expectations on. However, I will say, I love that the cheesy humor I loved so much in the cartoons was present in the comics as well.

Aaron Kleinheksel says

OK, this got 5 stars partly because of the ride it gave me down memory lane. I read all these issues of G.I. Joe for the first time when I was 8 or 9 years old when they were originally published. That was not the only reason they earn 5 stars, however.

It was interesting to read them again so many years later and realize with some amusement that much of my cynicism towards government and also interest in world politics and geography was, at least to some degree, influenced by Larry Hama's G.I. Joe scripts. The writing was, in my opinion, particularly good in the early issues of this title, before Hasbro deluged the market with so much G.I. Joe plastic that the comic's plotlines were often sabotaged by the need to give print / panel space to essentially advertise the latest toys.

It was actually almost eerie to re-read some of these early stories. One issue deals with a clearly right-wing American militia unit aiming to topple the world order, while others deal with the G.I. Joe team working in conjunction with the CIA and Afghan mujahideen allies. How many 9 year olds knew where Afghanistan was, let alone what the different factions were and what was going on there in 1982? I did! LOL

5 stars. /salute Larry Hama.

Ta0paipai says

Early G.I. Joe is basically a collection of one-shots starring the original Joe team. Less characters means we

get to see the cast take part in loads of action. Writers keep the plot fast paced and fun. And the art is awesome.

Chip Hunter says

Let me start by saying that this was my first exposure to G.I. Joe comics. I collected a few figurines when I was a kid, but only recently have developed some interest in graphic novels. I figured this re-release of the original G.I. Joe comics would be a great place to start, and I'm glad I did. Reading these old issues helped me establish a reference point with which to judge newer comics and reveals just how far the whole genre has come in the last 25 years.

That's not to say that I think newer comics are necessarily better than these old Marvel issues. They are just very different. Obviously meant for a much younger audience, they are way more simple, straight-forward, and naive. They don't contain near the amount of violence and other 'R-rated' material that many new graphic novels (including the more recent G.I. Joe material) contain. So, for a look back at times when comics were meant for kids and "Yo, Joe!" was a much more familiar phrase, this re-release is a treasure. For more exciting and realistic stuff aimed at a more mature audience, I'd recommend the newer material, starting with GI Joe Vol. 1: Reinstated from Devil's Due.

One curious note is why Marvel halted the production of these new collections. They discontinued the line after the first five volumes, collecting the first 50/155 issues. I can tell from the extravagant prices people are charging here on Amazon and on EBay that they must have sold all the copies they printed. I know a lot of people are wishing they would continue the series.

For me, I'll keep reading these old volumes for nostalgia's sake (assuming I can find the rest for a reasonable price). For anyone having trouble finding the next volume, here's the link: [G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero, Vol. 2 \(GI Joe\) \(Marvel\)](#).

Heather says

It was interesting reading the comics after watching the cartoon. There were a few characters I recognized, but I missed some of my favorites. As with the cartoons, there was drama, action, and humor. I enjoyed reading them and meeting new faces and seeing what shenanigans Cobra would get up to. I still prefer the cartoon though.

Willow Redd says

Here we have IDW's collection of the original Marvel Comics G.I. Joe series. I remember the first time I read some of these comics growing up and realizing how much better the writing was. The Joe team was much more clearly defined, their base was secret instead of some giant armored compound in the middle of a giant open space, and the missions were much more grounded in reality than most of the cartoon stories. Not to say that I didn't enjoy the cartoon as well, but these comic stories were worlds better.

This first volume collects the first ten issues of the Marvel series. We meet the Joe team (a much smaller and

more manageable group than would eventually become standard in the cartoon and toy lines); we see the Joes take on Cobra in the early days when it was just Cobra Commander and the Baroness in charge of everything; we are introduced to regular antagonists (and some time comrades) the October Guard; and we even get our first look at the Cobra recruitment town of Springfield, USA.

This is G.I. Joe at its best, with minds like Larry Hama, Denny O'Neil, and Jim Shooter running the show. If you have ever enjoyed any version of G.I. Joe through the years, this comic collection is worth checking out.

John Lamberth says

I had recently been getting the itch to go back and reread the entire original Marvel G.I. Joe series (which I own in TPBs). I didn't originally start reading GIJ with any regularity until about issue #40 and picked up the older issues sporadically so my memory of the early issues is kinda cloudy.

The first ten issues (collected here) are really nothing spectacular. The first nine issues really read like a typical war comic except for the weirdo villains in costumes. Issues six and seven introduce the Russian counterpart, the October (later Oktober) Guard, but even that doesn't have much of a feel of anything more than a standalone story.

I have to wonder if Larry Hama didn't really get much creative freedom until Marvel felt like the comic was gonna stick around.

But issue ten is where the groundwork starts getting laid for what ended up becoming a fascinating series. It starts off about like the others, but then the character development starts getting real when glimpses of Snake-Eyes origin are revealed. Suddenly, there is more going on than just some soldier guys fighting snake-themed villains. And that's when it starts getting interesting...

Erick Petersen says

First time reading a "graphic novel" and I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed it. I grew up in the 80's collecting the action figures and toys and watching the TV cartoon. The comic series, scripted by Larry Hama, is far superior to the TV cartoon series. For those who remember the action figures Hama was the one responsible for writing the dossiers on the file cards on the back of the packaging. What is so amazing about both the file cards and the comic is that he was given the task of writing a comic book story for a pile of sterile, inanimate and plastic action figures so that Hasbro could sell the toys and Marvel could sell comics. Drawing from his experience in Vietnam he came up with a story about a small covert anti-terrorism task force headquartered about 6 stories underground at the US Army's chaplains assistant school in Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island. This task force has one mission: to defeat Cobra, a ruthless terrorist organization determined to rule the world. If you have seen the cartoon series than forget everything you know about GI Joe (save for the names of the characters) when reading this, since Hama had nothing to do with the TV series. Some of the most striking differences between this and the TV cartoon is that real bullets are fired, people actually die, and there are other enemies to deal with besides Cobra, such as the Soviets in Afghanistan (this does take place in the 1980's after all).

A satisfying read that will keep me coming back for more. I'm really looking forward to volume 2 as I already know I will enjoy it...and knowing is half the battle!

Nikki says

I was pretty surprised by this, it was fun! It felt like an action movie, and it was easy to read. A bit text heavy at times, and pretty repetitive (good old Cobra strikes again!) but otherwise fun. The art was nothing to write home about, and all three women in the comic looked really similar. Scarlett kicks butt though! :)

Greg Strandberg says

You really can't beat these early Larry Hama issues. This book collects them all just like in the comics, but with better quality images and fewer opportunities for the pages to tear. The stories are great, and I got volume 2. Even my 3-year-old son likes them, much to the chagrin of his mother.

James says

I have fond memories of reading G.I. Joe comics so, when I saw this at the library, I thought I should pick it up and enjoy some nostalgia.

Unfortunately, this first volume shows that the series had not quite met its stride. The first 3 stories, as well as the last one, are pretty good but the middle section of the book suffers from poor art (not a fan of Herb Trimpe) and lame stories. Noticeably, these middle stories do not have Larry Hama in complete control (Trimpe does a lot of plotting), so I'm looking forward to the next collection in the hope that it starts moving in the directions I remember this series for.

Derek says

These earliest Joe stories lack many of the more colorful and diverse characters that would come to define the line throughout the 80s and 90s. As a result, these initial ten issues are enjoyable but start to run together after a while.

Miguel says

good is good

The_Mad_Swede says

IDW, who now holds the comics license to Hasboro's *G.I. Joe* franchise, has wisely opted for putting out the somewhat classic Marvel series from the early 80s and onwards for 155 issues (presumably 16 volumes in total if IDW goes the whole way and keeps to the 10 issues per volume format) in reprint TPBs, fittingly entitled *Classic G.I. Joe*. Now I have vague memories of reading at least some of the *G.I. Joe* comics in

Swedish translation as a kid, and I've always heard good stuff about Larry Hama's work as a writer on the series (not to mention that I enjoyed his work on *Wolverine* back in the day, so I decided to give this volume a shot.

And the result would be a bull's eye. I really had a lot of fun reading about this set of agents out to save the world from the evil Cobra. Is it dated? Sure, in the sense that most if not all agent/spy fiction between say the 50s and the 90s is, but that is only a problem if you have to read the fiction as contemporary (rather than at least partially historical), and to be quite frank, I'm still of the opinion that a lot of spy/agent stories are better off set in the Cold War period anyway.

Still, don't get me wrong, this isn't a dark moody piece of paranoia at hand, it is a piece of colourful action, much in line with the good action movies of the time, but in comics format. Hama has scripted all but two of the issues (one by Herb Trimpe and one by Steven Grant) and Herb Trimpe has done the art for six issues, with additional art (two issues each) from Don Perlin and Mike Vosburg. All of whom mesh really well, so there is no jarring sensation between these issues.

At the end of the day, it's a fun and entertaining read. In fact, by now, I already have two more volumes sitting on my shelf waiting for me.
